

HISTORY OF PERFIN USERS

KELSALL & KEMP'S

By Kevin Parkhill

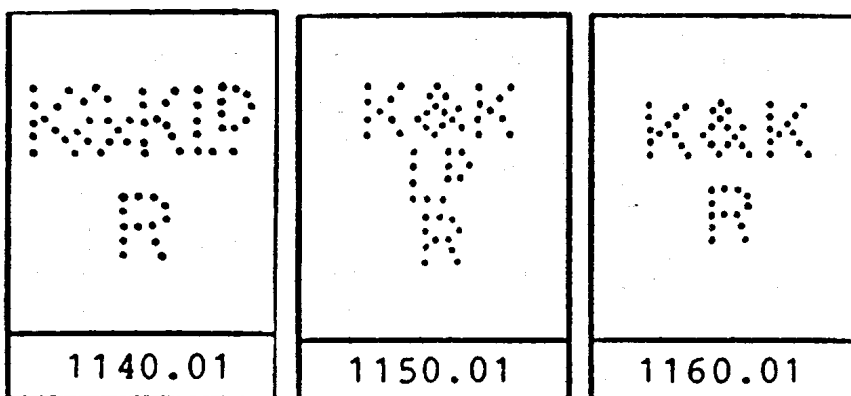
In the 19th Century cotton became the main trade of Lancashire, and Rochdale had its share of giant mills. However, because of its close proximity to Yorkshire's prevalent woollen industry, Rochdale did not change from wool to cotton as quickly as the more western mills of Lancashire.

In 1815 woollen trader Henry Kelsall of Mottram, Cheshire moved to Rochdale, bought wool, put it out to out-workers and sold the cloth at market. By 1835, Kelsall and his brother-in-law, William Bartlemere, had opened their own mill. In 1856, George Tawke Kemp married Henry Kelsall's daughter, became managing partner and so "Kelsall & Kemp" was born.

The firm became a registered company in 1890 and continued as an independent going concern until the take-over in 1968 by Coates Paton.

"Doctor Flannel" was a trade name of a Kelsall & Kemp product, of which they were very proud. High quality flannel was made from pure wool and the substitution of poor quality cotton for some of the wool made for a marked deterioration in quality. Kelsall and Kemp claimed that the cotton blended with the wool during the making of their flannel was 'scientifically controlled and added according to a definitely specified percentage', making for a superior cloth. There were at least ten stages in the process of producing the flannel cloth and Kelsall and Kemp could boast that from start to finish it could be done in their own mills.

If anyone has spare copies of the three perfins illustrated, (all used by Kelsall & Kemp) I, Kevin Parkhill, would like to purchase the same.



Precis of article in the local Rochdale paper, who, in turn, had taken the information from a booklet entitled, "The Doctor Flannel"